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Bachelor thesis

Czechoslovak Diplomacy and Israel in 1948 – 1967

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Abstract

This bachelor thesis focuses on the development of Czechoslovak-Israeli diplomatic relations from 1948 until 1967. Czechoslovakia supported the Jewish community in Palestine in the first years after the Second World War and was promoting the idea of a Jewish state. The friendly attitude on the part of Czechoslovakia was not altered after the communist coup in 1948. Czechoslovakia became the only state to support Israel, by supplying arms, during the War of Independence of 1948/49. Since 1950, however, the Czechoslovak attitude towards Israel began to change under the Soviet influence which was clearly dominant in the internal as well as external policies of the communist regime in Prague. The relations with Israel gradually deteriorated after 1950 as Zionism was declared as an enemy by the communist power. The anti-Zionism of the regime became most pronounced during the political trial against the former General Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Rudolf Slánský, as well as against other – mostly Jewish – party officials in 1952. The Israeli side was surprised by this fast turn in the Czechoslovak approach. This new policy of hostility culminated in 1967 when the diplomatic relations were suspended after the Six-Day War. The objective of the present thesis is to trace, on the basis of Czechoslovak archival documents as well as secondary sources, the key factors which determined the development of mutual relations between Czechoslovakia and Israel from 1948 until 1967.